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The Rubaiyat
of the
Twentieth Century
and the
Song of the Stars
by
CALCHAS





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of the
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by
ALCHAS

Man's true place in the Cosmos



1905

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PROLOGUE



LOOK at this historic World-picture: For centuries the keen edged scimitar of the Moslem had hewed to a dead level of Faith in Western Asia. "Exterminate the Heretics," was the watchword of the Faithful, who pillaged and massacred with an untiring zeal in the name of the One God and of Mohammed his Prophet. Then add to this increment of Lust and Rapine those other years of the first Crusade, in which Christian Europe had hurled itself in an equally relentless and bloody Fanaticism at the throats of its Mohammedan opponents, sparing, in its turn, neither age nor sex in the wholesale slaughter of its adversaries.

Prologue

This is the historic era. The Time, in Christian Chronology, within the earlier half of the 12th century, when, amid the clashing swords of Religious Fanaticism, the still, small voice of Philosophic Thought and Questioning Doubt dared utterance. The priceless gem of Logical Thought had never a more appropriate setting, and Human Reason and Human Kindness had never, since the beginning of the recorded centuries, a sweeter Interpreter than He, who, amid these turbulent surroundings, thus sounded a note for Humanity—this Omar Khayyam of Naishipur.

The Student of the contemporary History of the period can readily see, that, for any warmth of coloring in the more vivid pictures of material enjoyment, presented by the Persian Poet, there are, at the least, extenuating circumstances, and for any intended offense

Prologue

against the Morality and Social Ethics of his time, the verdict, with the evidence all in, of nine out of ten, "good men and true," would be "Not Guilty."

It is a far stretch in the progress of the Race, from the mystic superstitions of the Poet's environment to the ultra practical standpoint to which we have attained. Many a seemingly unbridgeable chasm lies between. And yet, his, is what we deem an essentially modern habit of thought; his, is a very vivisection of ideas, which spares nothing, and defiantly braves everything which does not carry upon its face the impress of Truth. Hemmed in on every side by the fierce Moslem Fanaticism of that early era, he yet takes nothing for granted, and calmly probes the life, of which he is a part, down to the basic foundation of facts which he can tie up to. And, at the last, with our latter day, all-em-

Prologue

bracing scientific knowledge, how near we come, many of us, to the conception of Life, deduced from the meagre data of his period, by this stout-hearted old Persian Philosopher.

In the *Life of the Times* he is a Spectator—an Observer. His attitude can hardly be called strenuous, from any standpoint. To us, Moderns, even his much-voiced regard for Wine and the Sex seem in the light of his calm Philosophy, as somewhat exaggerated—something to divert the minds of his Compeers from the bloody fanaticism rampant in the early Moslem propagandism, to the, at least more Human ideas, of mere physical enjoyment. The *Life of the Day* was, doubtless, just a trifle too vehement, to the mind of the Poet-Philosopher, and hence, the generous outpouring of the oil of Human-kindness and skeptical questioning on the turbid sea

Prologue

of Religious Frenzy. It is the poetry of Fact and the normal Life condition, as against the implacable fury of the Zealot and the Religionaire. A radical intellectual revolt, it must have seemed at the day and time, against the pretensions of Islam, and the more than Arabian Nights Tales of the founder of that creed.

It is the Religious element, however, of his surroundings which, undoubtedly, gives color and depth to the picture he presents for our contemplation. His *Rubáiyát* is, in a sense, the despairing intellectual outcome of his struggle to reduce the weird Religious imaginings of his time into harmony with the prosaic facts of existence. That he was unsuccessful, his verses show; but the Poet does not despair. He accepts the good things of Life, and over all maintains that invincibly cheerful spirit,

Prologue

which, in calm disillusion, faces the inevitable happenings of Mortal Existence.

Omar extends across the centuries the sturdy hand of a bon-comradie to all that shall follow after. As for us, we admire his equanimity, We are glad in the steady cheer of his spirit.

Times have changed since then, and creeds, too, have changed, both in their interpretation, and the methods employed in propagating them. The question, in Religious matters, is no longer, "What must I believe, under peril of decapitation?" but, "What can I believe, in consonance with Fact and Reason?"

We have come to know a good many things since the old Persian Philosopher laid down for his final rest in the rose garden of Naishipur. Many of the Problems of Life have been reduced, in these later days, to their lowest terms.

Prologue

Every now and again some old-time factor of mystery has been eliminated. Under Scientific Investigation it has been found to be a result of some heretofore not understood, but none the less law regulated, activity of the universal Force Medium. The practically, instantaneous nature of sight transmission to the human eye is now measurably understood, with all of its accompanying phenomena, including color. We know definitely in what consists the vibratory transfer of heat, light, and power, more especially observed in the case of the enormous Solar output. The phenomena leading to and accompanying the growth of plant and vegetable Life are readily found in the experimental data of our Specialists. The interchange of disintegration and building up of molecules, in the leaf of the plant, under the vibratory action of the Solar

Prologue

heat ray, is more or less familiar to most of us.

And then we have gotten down, in recent years, to some fairly intelligible conception of the fundamentals of the Physical Life, itself. A continuous metabolic change within the tissues, seems a sine qua non, of its maintenance. What is the basis of metabolism? Chemical combination. What actuates chemical combination? The electric potentials of the atom and molecule. But the electric potentials are simply a condensation of the Universal Medium about these material centers.

So there we are. All roads of the ancient world led to Rome; so the Modern Investigator, in whatever path of physical or even psychical research, if he gets to the bottom of things, finds himself at the last, confronting this limitless Actuator of Life and Matter.

Prologue

Indeed, it would be idle to enumerate. All phenomena are, in their finality, traceable to some law of action of the All-pervading Medium on Matter. All mysteries are resolved into one—that of the essential nature of the Force Medium, itself, and of the manner of its action upon the material molecule. An accompanying proposition, doubtless permanently unsolvable, is, as to the manner of the transfer of attractive force—whether in the simple form of the magnet or electro-magnet, or in those enormous potencies extending between cosmic bodies.

Some have said, that with us, the day of Poetry has passed—that with the modern complete knowledge of the machinery of Nature, and the accompanying narrowing of the field of the Unknown, that the imagination is necessarily restricted in its action. But yet, are

Prologue

we not confronted, at every turn, by this greater mystery?

Perhaps, even in the matter of Poetry, what we lose on the one hand, we may gain on the other, and, in the coming time, Poetry itself, be harnessed to the simple statement of facts, which, in themselves, have the elements of Poetry. May not the high water mark of the Poetry of the future be that which shall the nearest approximate to a realistic depiction of the workings of the unseen, the immaterial, the intangible, but all-pervading, and all-powerful Force Actuator of Matter and of Life?—The changeless, all-potent, everywhere-present tenant of that limitless Cosmos, whose boundaries are those of unending Space, and which the modern Physicist designates as the Ether?

The utmost which the writer has proposed, in the following pages, is to prof-

Prologue

fer, from our present standpoint, the after-word of Science, in explanation of the seemingly, unsolvable Life-problems, which, in every direction, confronted the vision of the Philosopher-Poet of Persia in the mediæval surroundings of his day. For this purpose, while retaining the metrical form of the original, he has found it necessary to sacrifice, to a not inconsiderable extent, the diaphanous texture of a poetic imagery to the somewhat rigid requirements of ascertained fact and a logical deduction from established data. Truth, alone, is omnipotent; her's, is the regal right of way.

The Rubáiyát
of the
Twentieth Century

THE RUBÁIYÁT
OF
THE 20th CENTURY
BY
CALCHAS

I

FOR ME, the purpled skies that herald
Morn—
The gilded chariot wheels of coming
Dawn—
The hour of blissful calm and restful
peace
That broods the Silent World ere Day
is born.

II

Oh Saki! When from all things I may
pass
As fading flower, or wisp of scattered
grass,
Be this the garnered purport of my
years
That Calm and Peace that naught can
e'er harass!

The Rubáiyát of the 20th Century

III

Would'st Thou the scheme of things
but backward turn—
Life's garish Day bring back to bliss-
ful Morn—
Then might the Tree of Knowledge
bloom unsought,
Why, then, its golden fruit we might
but spurn.

IV

“Ah ! But the hours of Morn are brief ”
we say,
“And dawn is but a presage of the
Day ;
No hand may backward roll the scroll
of Fate
Nor Roseate Dawn, itself, may longer
stay.

V

“Mayhap, indeed, that Faith of Morn
were best ;
If happy so, why then, You were but
blest ;
Per contra, You may have a fad for
Truth,
And choosing it may chance it on the
rest.”

The Rubáiyát of the 20th Century

VI

To such, the breaking Dawn a summons
brings—
The portaled gate of Day wide open
flings;
To those that sow, and those that joy-
ful reap,
Full short shall pass the hours on fleet-
ing wings.

VII

This Message brief, it brings, in haste,
to You—
“From out past Embryo, lo comes the
new !
The continental lift of Thought up-
rears
The wide horizons of a broader view.”

VIII

To Basic Fact has delved the Later
Day—
The Laws of Force that in each Atom
play—
Could we but pass one single step
beyond
Then might we not Life's Scheme of
Being weigh?

The Rubáiyát of the 20th Century

IX

Could our Discernment, downward
reaching, spell
The Name that stands for grouping of
the Cell,
Then, might we not Life build up and
maintain?
And Life's whole Secret then, be our's,
as well?

X

“Ah, but,” You say, “all Knowledge is
revealed;
The rest, from Man the Gods have kept
concealed.”
Yea! but the Revelation's here and
now
And He that seeks, its potencies shall
wield!

XI

And shall we fondly cling to what is
old?
Nay, but the Newer Thought its place
shall hold;
The filmy garniture of Dreams shall
pass,
And tawdry gilt give way to Truth's
pure gold.

The Rubáiyát of the 20th Century

XII

We know, indeed, the Actuating Cause ;
Full well, we know its never changing
Laws

Which hold alike the Atom and the
Star ;

Shall Knowledge, in its wider limit
pause ?

XIII

The primal cell growth of the Mortal
Clay

That builds the Fabric, and the chemic
play

Of forming Molecule within—were
these

Explained—why then, of Life, we'd
know the way.

XIV

“The Last Resolvement,” ah, there lies
the clew ;

In it we read whence Life, itself, is
due—

The viewless Ether, actuating all—
From out the Old, ever evolving New.

XV

In balanced equipoise each Atom stands,
Held in the all-pervading Ether's hands,
Inspired by it, to Force and Life gives
birth,

Now here, now there it moves at its
commands.

* * * * *

XVI

Ah ! Why deem Life as such a Priceless
Thing

When Fleeting Time its end so quick
shall bring?

Might it not rather seem a Random
Toy

Which, wrought from Matter, Force may
careless fling ?

XVII

In freakish fashion, thus into the World,
By Nature's grim caprice, thus careless
hurled,

With oversense endowed, this fear-
some Child

Doth ask the reason Why, in vortex
whirled.

The Rubáiyát of the 20th Century

XVIII

And from dark cliffs of Fate, encircling
nigh,
Comes ever back the shouted answer—
Why?
From narrowing circle grim the Echo
came—
The shouted Question was its own
Reply.

XIX

One sang to Fate a song of Love Divine,
That soothed all Human Hearts, and
thrilled like wine,
And, Lo, from beetling walls upreared
came back
A song that throbbed with Ecstasy Sub-
lime!

XX

The endless files of Life in gladsome
throng,
From rank to rank, its swelling notes
prolong;
But thankless Sticklers, are we, You
and I,
That ask some valid Reason for the
song.

The Rubáiyát of the 20th Century

XXI

One thing is sure—When You shall
question Fate
The Answer will but be, that which You
state.
The Dreams that to the Dreamer have
been told,
As very Truth the Dreamer shall relate.

* * * * *

XXII

Can word of Seer, in fitting terms express
Why Life demands that Atoms coalesce?
The Human Atom most of all—why it
Should find the joy of Life in sweet
caress?

XXIII

“Ah, but such transient joy goes soon,”
You say,
“And Brooding Care comes in its wake,
to stay ;”
E’en so, were it not best, the Flagon
fill
And drink to Life one gladsome Cup, to
day?

The Rubáiyát of the 20th Century

XXIV

Oh days of toil and Hopes of Heavenly
Bliss !
If Paradise were only such as this,
That were enough, I trow—if all its
years
Were but the Joy prolonged, of Love's
sweet kiss.

XXV

There is no better thing beneath the
skies,
Nor all the vaunted Wisdom of the
Wise,
Or Sages Learned, can point a blither
way
Than this, that with the fleeting mo-
ment flies.

XXVI

Ah, how Time flies ! The footsteps of
high noon
Had but just passed, and then, so soon !
So soon !
The outward sloping shadows of the
Night,
That comes apace—and you pale rising
Moon !

The Rubáiyát of the 20th Century

XXVII

But Shadows are we, dancing on the
floor—
Bubbles, that break along an Endless
Shore;
The Light goes out—the Waters fail
—and then,
Bubble and Shadow are No More—No
More!

XXVIII

Out from the Dark—and back to Dark-
ness deep—
For one brief day, the Phase of Life we
keep;
All else is Shade; and Life, itself, is
but
The Transient Waking of a Dreamless
Sleep.

XXIX

Think of the multitudes since Time
began—
The numbers vast of Prehistoric Man!
What were one Atom of that mighty
mass?
What is the Gist of Life, and where the
Plan?

The Rubaiyat of the 20th Century

XXX

One says, "That all of these are but a few,
That, lost one day, the next appear anew;
As Actors pass upon the mimic stage,
And straightway then, come back again to view."

XXXI

Ah, sure! But could we in such Life take pride—
If each were steeped in foul Oblivion's tide
Till friends and name were all alike forgot?
Add Life to Life, what gain might be implied?

XXXII

"The Key is Faith," one said "Believe, and then
The waning sight that fades to earthly ken
Shall dawn on glories bright of Paradise."
But who those Splendors yet have seen?
and when!

The Rubáiyát of the 20th Century

XXXIII

“ So You,” he said, “ tire not of Toilsome Way
The Path shall upward lead to Endless Day,
And Being Bright on wings of glory rise
From out this Chrysalis of Mortal Clay.

XXXIV

“ The infancy of Man such things repeats
From age to age; must we be fed on sweets
Like children? Let’s be content with facts,”
The Skeptic said, “nor sigh for dainty meats.

XXXV

“ Sooth, who has asked? Why on your marrow bones?
Why speak in suppliant wavering tones?
Give ear to Nature’s Law and learn it well;
Her’s are no mystic rites; no pomp of Thrones.

The Rubáiyát of the 20th Century

XXXVI

“This one thing doth she ask that you
shall do—

Give earnest heed that one and one
make two;

Add Fact to Fact; deduce by Logic
Thought

The Formula that states the Problem
true.

XXXVII

“Important people are we, You and I,
From our own standpoint. We're the
reason why

All things exist. Yet even as the
grass

We fade; and just as impotently die.

XXXVIII

“To us, the Fading Flower a measure
true

Holds good of Life; it failed, and then
there grew

From stock or seed, straightway an-
other stalk,

But gone for aye is that which once we
knew.”

* * * * *

The Rubáiyát of the 20th Century

XXXIX

Could we recoup the mould wherein are
cast
Fair Day and Night, when Day and
Night are past,
What sweet rehearsing of the Scenic
Play
Might come, in finished product, at the
last.

XL

And then, with wise fore-knowledge,
could but we,
As, looking backward now, the Drama
see,
Forewarned had been fore-armed with
magic spell;
How wise the Play ! How well our Part
should be !

XLI

Think but of that which yesterday the
sun shone on !
Actors and Actresses they now are
gone—
How passing sweet, could we the
Scene renew—
The Characters redraw, as once were
drawn !

The Rubáiyát of the 20th Century

XLII

But since its Sun has sank to rise no more
Were it not better far to shut the door
Upon the Past and in the Present stay,
Nor dream that it may have some glad encore?

* * * * *

XLIII

Can you conceive of Time the ceaseless flow,
Which, ending or beginning may not know?
Think of a stream with neither source nor mouth
Whose all-embracing tide shall ever onward go!

XLIV

“The mountains rear,” you say, “to Heaven their wall;
The yawning valleys deep, between them fall.”
And yet, we know, from cosmic point of view,
That but one simple curved line bounds them all.

The Rubáiyát of the 20th Century

XLV

The whirring wheel, that marks the second's course—
How can it guage those might realms of Force
That in the Mainspring lie? Or movement slow
Of it trace backward to its primal source?

XLVI

How strange, that from the mere insen-
sate mold
Should ceaseless spring such shapes as we behold!
Such Paragons, of structure marvel-
lous,
As those upon the Scroll of Life en-
rolled!

XLVII

Or that in substance so intangible
Such mighty potencies of Force should dwell!
The bonds that bind us to the Solar Mass,
And hold the great Star Universe as well!

The Rubáiyát of the 20th Century

XLVIII

When the Great Saki on the Heavenly
floor
Sapphire and Amethyst did wide out-
pour,
Star blazed on Star through all the
circling dome,
And deepest Darkness stayed the sight
no more.

XLIX

Night's sable curtain then was upward
rolled ;
Backward flung its pall of darkness, fold
on fold,
When the great Star System's orient
splendor
Adown the Spaces broke in amethystine
gold.

L

Dim fires that glowed, in firstlings of
their birth
As Morning rays that stream through
mists of Earth,
And thence in brightness wax from
hour to hour,
Till Noon's white light proclaims their
fervid worth.

The Rubáiyát of the 20th Century

LI

And then, the afternoon of fading light,
That wanes, by slow degrees, to Cosmic
Night

Of planetary forms opaque, on which
Life's Drama may attain some tragic
height.

* * * * *

LII

The Dinosaur, could he his story tell,
Might sound to human ears some sombre
knell;

Might tell of Cosmic Cyclone sweep-
ing vast,
As that which cast on Martinique its
spell;

LIII

How split Earth's crust, from shore to
shore,

While downward deluging of waters
pour

Upon the central ball of liquid fire,
And thence were outward cast with deaf-
ening roar.

The Rubáiyát of the 20th Century

LIV

Dissociate gases—walls of blighting fire
That upward to the topmost Heavens
aspire;
Whose lurid sheet of Hell enwraps
the Globe,
And at whose touch, all Forms of Life
expire.

LV

How often, think you, since Old Time
began,
Has been rehearsed such tragedy of
Man?
Race upward groping into sentient
mould,
Till sudden ending close its Life's brief
span.

LVI

Evolution slow, through Endless Time
and Space
And then the sudden, final, Coup-de-
grace—
Now here, now there, resounds the
Knell of Fate—
To Cosmic Ear the Requiem of a Race.

The Rubáiyát of the 20th Century

LVII

“That Tragic End,” you say, “is but the
curse
Of Deity for Sin.” Ah, no ; 'tis some-
thing worse !
And, mark the sorry nature of the
truth,
'Tis but an incidental play of Force !

LVIII

—Unerring Law, that through Creation
runs,
Whose mighty Universe of Stars and
Suns
Their retinues of Planets each control,
On which, perchance, some Mould of
Life has sprung

LIX

From lowest root, and in their radiance
bright
Climbed slowly upward to the sentient
height
Of Reason ; one fleeting moment
basked therein—
And then the Cosmic Finale, and the
Night.

The Rubáiyát of the 20th Century

LX

Just for one little day, they preened their
pride—

“For us the World was made; Creation
wide

The Gods have builded well for Man’s
abode,”

In such glad Faith they lived, and in it
died.

LXI

“Since One has cared,” they said, “Us
to create,

And planned our every want to satiate,
By Faith, we know that he will guard
and keep

And raise Us to some future High Es-
tate.

LXII

“For if a Life so brief bespeak such
care,

The Gods will sure, some Future Life
prepare,

And they who worthily shall labor
here

Shall reap a Life of Blissful Glory
there.”

The Rubáiyát of the 20th Century

LXIII

“Ah then,” you say, “the Fools, perchance, were wise.

Where Ignorance is Bliss—why, then, the prize

Of Life goes to the Fool. The goal of Life

Is Joy; and he but wins, who joyful dies.”

LXIV

And yet, is’t fair, a frothing proverb’s sound

So should beguile, on Being’s topmost round?

If that we dream should stand for that we have—

Why then, the Beggar surely would be crowned.

LXV

Relapse to Fact! Give Truth her right of way!

Who boasted yesterday—where now are they?

The Shouting Seers, and they who followed on

Alike, with mound of Earth, are crowned today.

The Rubaiyat of the 20th Century

LXVI

They asked the Whence and Whither
of their Way—

“Surely some Reason gives to Us our
Day.”

’Tis but the narrow view that deems
it so;

All Life is but a happening of the Play.

LXVII

The Stage—the Universe; the Actors—
two—

Matter and Force, whose interactions
through

All Space, mark the Eternities of
Time.

Lo, from the Old Evolvement cometh
New!

* * * * *

LXVIII

Then straight another voice took up the
strain,

That from Life’s deepest root had rose
again

And from his standpoint gave a ver-
sion true,

That might the Miracle of Life explain.

The Rubáiyát of the 20th Century

LXIX

“In mixture due, of moisture heat and air
Lo the Great Builder doth such Life prepare!
Foundations deep, beyond the ken of Man,
Thence rising upward in a structure fair.

LXX

“Aye, if all mould of Life were wholly lost—
Atoms dissociate, in Chaos tossed—
Lo, from this primal stage of Nothingness
Would the Great Builder start, nor count the cost.

LXXI

“Step onto step the mighty plan unfold;
Step add to step, as Æons vast unrolled!
We pine for that we may not have,
and yet,
Would we half care, unending to behold?

The Rubáiyát of the 20th Century

LXXII

“One Potent Agent through Creation
thrills;
No Space, minutest, but its presence
fills;
The Force we term electric—’tis the
same
That wields the Universes as it wills.

LXXIII

“So you but tire of such vast Cosmic
Play
Then shall the Atom be to you a stay;
See each to each in combination held
By the same Power that rules the Heav-
enly Way !

LXXIV

“The Body’s structure doth it permeate;
Each constituent atom actuate;
And up from lowest realms, of mere
brute sense
That which we deem a Soul, doth thus
create.

The Rubáiyát of the 20th Century

LXXV

“What else, think you, than this, could
work the spell
Whose primal fashioning enwrought the
Cell,
With power of reproduction of its
Kind?
On such Foundation, Lo, it buildeth
well.”

LXXVI

Yea, all Time’s secrets are, but this re-
vealed ;
Its Entity, alone, to us concealed ;
To Forms of Force and Life, how
gives it birth ?
How, all their countless armies doth it
wield ?

LXXVII

Yon Sphere of blazing fire, whose radi-
ance bright
Endows this rolling Globe with Life and
Light—
What, think you, are the bonds whose
tension holds
Each bound to each, with such Titanic
might ?

The Rubáiyát of the 20th Century

LXXVIII

Ask of the Atom—it doth feel the same—
That forceful pull—you give to it a name
 And deem it thus explained; but who
 can give
The very how and manner of the game?

LXXIX

Inscrutable! Explain it if you can;
Just when, and where, and how, this
 Force began!
Its Essence what? Cognizance gives
 it not
To sight or touch or any sense of Man.

LXXX

That which it does—that only can we
 see—
The mighty Sum of all the things that
 be.
 Alike, the Atom and the Cosmic Mass
Proclaim this vast potential Entity.

The Rubáiyát of the 20th Century

LXXXI

Inspired by it, some Problems we have
solved—

The speed with which some distant star
revolved—

All Matter one with our familiar
forms—

Matter and Force, for aye, the same, in-
volved.

LXXXII

“Ah, but,” you say, “What’s Matter, but
a name?

All Forms of it from out the Ether came ;
Each into each, in last Resolvement
given—

Both, in the final outcome, are the
same.”

LXXXIII

If this be true, it follows then, of course,
Matter, itself, is but compacted Force ;
This is the Problem of the Later Day
To trace the Law of Being to its source.

The Rubáiyát of the 20th Century

LXXXIV

Why then, if that be true, we can but
say,
Of Forms Material, “That for one
Day—
One Transient Day of Time, they do
but stand,
Then, back into the Unseen pass away.

LXXXV

“Why then, this Mighty World—this
Rolling Ball,
Yea ! all of Things that Be, are Spirits
all !
In round of Change, they at the last,
into
Such Primal Form, intangible, shall
fall.”

LXXXVI

From Change to Change,—such is the
Cosmic Scheme ;
And Things we deem that Are, they do
but seem,
In lapsing years of Endless Time they
pass,
Like as the baseless fabric of a Dream.

The Rubáiyát of the 20th Century

LXXXVII

“ Ah, then ! ” You say, “ If it may true ap-
pear
That e’en in Matter Gross, such Change
inhere,
Why then, this matter-weighted, Hu-
man Soul
Shall surely rise, some day, to Higher
Sphere.

LXXXVIII

“ And they who jeered the erstwhile
Form Divine,
And but as Clay would all its scope de-
fine—
Lo now, the Flouted Clay, itself, doth
change—
Doth change, and with a Light Trans-
figured shine ! ”

LXXXIX

“ You grasp at straws ! ” the Skeptic
blandly spoke.
“ In thoughts of self your mind doth
blindly grope;
E’en as on ancient tombstone oft en-
graved,
Your reasoning powers have, ‘ died in
joyful hope.’ ”

The Rubáiyát of the 20th Century

XC

“To Faith, it matters not that you may
be
But as one drop, dissolved in boundless
sea—
Nay, more—your very atoms scattered
wide—
Lost in the Realm of vast Immensity.”

* * * * *

XCI

If but you tire not of dull Logic’s weight,
Or proven Facts to recapitulate
From whence deductions broad are
made,
Then these, will I, in turn, most briefly
state.

XCII

By Science high there has been plainly
shown
The truth of Newton’s Law, “All Force
is one
From Atom to the Star, and Distance
Squared
A measure true holds good from Mite
to Sun.”

The Rubáiyát of the 20th Century

XCIII

And others then, Experts in Chemic
Lore,
When tracing Actuation to the core,
Have found the Force involved to be
Electric,
And to it all Atomic Force thus score.

XCIV

And then the Wireless Message clearly
proves
The Medium of Space through which it
moves
To be Electric, and hence, the Ether
vast
One with Electric Force it plain be-
hooves.

XCV

So these Concepts stand proved—then
may not we
Assume that it must demonstrably be
That in the Ether lies the Potent
Force
Of all those Things Material that we
see?

The Rubáiyát of the 20th Century

XCVI

For if one Actuating Force alone,
There be, from Atom to the Star, that
zone

Of Power must be Electric—since that
it is

Which in the Atom holds, as has been
shown.

XCVII

And thus that old-time Problem of the
Earth

Solution finds, and Gravitation's worth,
In terms of Force, the Ether wields ;
'tis this

That rules the great Electric Universe.

* * * * *

XCVIII

Built up of Atoms ; into Atoms turned ;
Man, one day born, the next day is eat
by worms.

Within the circle of his Life's brief
span

May he not yet, the Scheme of Being
learn ?

Think of the life of the Ephemeron !
How swift, to us, its years would seem
go on !
Whose Birth, and Life and Death,—
one fleeting day
Should the full cycle of its Being con !

C

So like, mayhap, in Cosmic Time, may
seem
Those evanescent markings which we
deem
A measure fit, of Time; that which we
call
Eternity, may be some transient gleam

CI

That, in recurring flashes, darts across
The flood of Time Unending and is lost.
Each Star Evolvement may but mark
A passing hour unto the Cosmic Host.

The Rubáiyát of the 20th Century

CII

As one that journeys far by swiftest
train,
Where landscape flashes by and fields
amain,
With din of whirring wheels and noise
of steam,
So fast we rush, Life's farther shore to
gain.

CIII

Or like as bark, that on the billows
whirled,
For one brief day, its flaunting sails unfurled;
Then straightway passed from sight,
with westering Sun
Adown the sloping border of the World.

CIV

So brief the space betwixt us and the
Gaol!
So short the Day, ere Night doth on us
roll!
Could we the Rythm catch of Cosmic
Time,
Might we not grasp the meaning of the
Whole?

* * * * *

The Rubáiyát of the 20th Century

CV

A Demon of Unrest once thralled me
quite;
Enwrapped my Soul in gruesome, shad-
owy light—
What was the All of Space? Its limit
where?
Such question hurled I at the Cosmic
Night.

CVI

About the border of the Rolling World
I swept, on wings of Light, with pinions
furled;
Slipped off the Robe of Clay, that
weighted down,
Then, as a sunbeam straight is onward
hurled,

CVII

Outward I sped. All sense of Time
was lost;
One instant, had flashed by the outer
post
Of Planetary path, and then, the yawn-
ing gulf
Thrown out around each member of the
Host.

The Rubáiyát of the 20th Century

CVIII

As One that dreams a dream, and wakes
 to hear
Sweet Bells of Morn vibrate upon the
 ear,
 The daylight of another Sun had
 dawned—
Had dawned and blazed, to sink, and
 disappear.

CIX

And swift, there passed another, red,
 like wine;
To right, and left, a Host, in serried line
 Swept by. The changing Constella-
 tions gleamed
In combinations strange, that bore no
 sign.

CX

I caught the rythm vast, of Cosmic
 Time—
Of slow Eternity's unending chime;
 The impact of the fleeting years was
 lost,
And Life, to me, was one immortal
 prime.

The Rubáiyát of the 20th Century

CXI

Long ages of Old Earth had come and
gone
As still relentlessly, my course kept on.
And now its multi-myriad hosts were
passed,
The great Star-system's outer verge was
won—

CXII

Where trails its path of light the far-
thest star.
One seeming moment brief, did I debar
The strident onward motion of my
way ;
Then on my cosmic sight there gleamed
afar,

CXIII

A glittering ring of opalescent light—
Like diadem upon the brow of Night—
Another Universe of radiant suns ;
Betwixt, there yawned abysmal depth
and height.

The Rubáiyát of the 20th Century

CXIV

As into these I plunged, the restful
sense
Of Cosmic Night fell on my Soul ; the
tense
Condition of the psychic nerve dropped
off,
And all the gross concepts of Matter
dense.

CXV

An Age—an Æon—were but points of
Time ;
The bells of vast Eternity, whose chime
Unending is the music of the Spheres,
Came sweet, as sound of an unceasing
rhyme.

CXVI

I saw the birth, the ripening, and decay
Of Stars and Suns ; I sensed the inter-
play
Of Force and Matter, and the outward
whirl
Of Systems vast, which gives to them
their Day.

The Rubáiyát of the 20th Century

CXVII

I marked the several stages of their
course—

Their slow absorption of Magnetic
Force,

As radiation brought that cooler state,
From which such Potencies are not
divorced.

CXVIII

As on our Earth, the thin and cooling
shell

E'en now, doth feel of Force such potent
spell,

So, at the last, 'twixt cosmic bodies
cold,

Magnetic bonds, with mighty strength
impel.

CXIX

And then—the final throes, in which
Force hurled

A Maelstrom Vast, of opaque Suns, which
whirled

In spirals inward, till a seething glow
Of flaming Nebula was wide unfurled.

The Rubáiyát of the 20th Century

CXX

Explosive, grinding impact, mass on
mass ;
Atoms dissociate, in Chaos cast ;
Dissevered molecules—a spher ic
bulk—
To this resolves the Universe at last.

CXXI

One phase was done of that unending
course ;
Which flows from far, illimitable source ;
One circling round, of number infinite,
Of Matter wielded in the hands of Force.

CXXII

Such movement slow, can Mortal under-
stand ?
The opening and the shutting of a hand
'Twas like, from cosmic standpoint,
but to view
From Earth—no sight of Man might
apprehend.

The Rubáiyát of the 20th Century

CXXIII

Ten thousand time ten thousand had it
been ;
Ten million times ten million, yet again ;
 No number vast could least approxi-
 mate
A date, when Time's Eternal March
began.

CXXIV

And Fancy's farthest stretch could see
 no end,
A down those long Eternities that blend
 In indistinguishable haze, in which
The Future's mighty Æons, vast extend.

* * * * *

CXXV

To Mortal ear can one explain the way
Of change to Time Unending ? From
 the day
That measure brief doth span, from
 sun to sun,
To that, whose portals vast no bar shall
 stay ?

The Rubaiyat of the 20th Century

CXXVI

Can you to me the secret way disclose
Of Force, which each Material Atom
knows?

The bonds, intangible to sense, that
bind

The Atom and the Cosmic Mass in
throes

CXXVII

Of motion without end? The interplay
Of Molecule, which forms, of Life, the
stay?

That phase of Evolution trace in full
Which marks the outline of a Cosmic
Day.

CXXVIII

Look at this miracle of Cosmic Force—
Transmitted ceaselessly, from radiant
source,

A hundred million series intercross
Of Ether waves, yet each distinctive
holds.

CXXIX

Nothing is lost; no jar of Ether waves;
No wastage of transmission, as it laves
The far Eternities of Space—its sum
The same—diffusion only, distance gave.

* * * * *

CXXX

“But Mortal Life,” one said, “He stands
aghast,
Who views the mould wherein such Life
is cast;
Its topmost height and flower is but a
wreck,
Which on rock and lee shore driveth
fast.”

CXXXI

“As for the Past—the least that’s said
were best;
Historic facts, in merest outline dressed,
Were g r u e s o m e reading; he who
dropped
Oblivion’s curtain on it—were thrice
blessed.”

The Rubáiyát of the 20th Century

CXXXII

Go back to record dim of History—
The ghoulish rites, anent the mystery
That shrouded Life; the Human Sac-
rifice,
Where altars smoked with blood—a
Devil's orgie.

CXXXIII

Or note those times more recent in their
date,
When cruel persecution might await
The Unbeliever and the Heretic,
Whose feet might wander from the pre-
scribed gate.

CXXXIV

Do you but mind the Thought of Yes-
terday?
The Ignorance, that even then held
sway?
That made of Man, the buffet and the
toy
Of weirdly sportive Demons, in their
play?

The Rubáiyát of the 20th Century

CXXXV

Folks of this earlier day would time
employ
In argument—"Would God, indeed de-
stroy
With brimstone and with fire, those
he had made?"
To the Elect, a sort of sombre joy

CXXXVI

That he, himself, was saved, would ease
the woe,
And in a kind of grim perspective, show
A background deep, of dark funereal
hue,
Which on high lights of bliss effect
should throw.

CXXXVII

"Yea! All of Men, in Hell shall seeth-
ing quake."
So said, of old, the Seers. You say,
"Mistake?
Not all?" Why then, We'll say, "nine
tenths;"
What minds? A fraction more or less
we'll take.

The Rubáiyát of the 20th Century

CXXXVIII

Most lucky thing it was, the scheme was
naught ;
For if such God had been, as Man had
thought,
'Tis plain to see, He straight to Hell
had sent
They who for Him had held dishonor-
ing thought.

CXXXIX

Vast Problems here, of Destiny per-
plexed ;
All Time they filled—both This World,
and the Next.
Those of This World were hard
enough to grasp—
As for the Next, what might you then
expect !

CXL

Some wholly had their thoughts en-
grossed in this—
And some, in Worlds of Everlasting
Bliss
Took stock. Alike, were garnered in
the sheaf,
For He that reaped no single stalk did
miss.

The Rubáiyát of the 20th Century

CXLI

Some sought in pleasures deep, their
sense to drown;
And others, for an Everlasting Crown.
A long drawn note for Future Bliss
sufficed
For some; and other some preferred
cash down.

CXLII

“I go where Honor calls,” One said,
forsooth,
“Naught else the blood can sate of
Fiery Youth.”
And yet, what higher Blazonry had
Time
Than simply this—A SERVANT OF THE
TRUTH.

CXLIII

The Dawn of Knowledge—this has
brought the key
To us of Life—the “Open Sesame”
Of Fact, interpreted by Logic Thought,
In light of which, all things we plainly
see.

The Rubáiyát of the 20th Century

CXLIV

And yet, we pine, betimes, for gleaming
skies—
Celestial Glories bright of Paradise;
Alack! and Alas! for their banish-
ment!
The Dream transcends the facts of the
Wise.

CXLV

The Racial Thought, by Revelation
newer,
Bed rock of Truth has reached—founda-
tions sure
Are laid, whereon shall rise a structure
grand,
Whose outline clear no Mystery shall
obscure.

CXLVI

But we miss the sweep of Angelic
wings—
Yea, something is gone from the Scheme
of Things—
That Gilded Dream of the radiant
dawn,
Which the glare of Noon to Oblivion
flings.

The Rubáiyát of the 20th Century

CXLVII

And then One said, “What ! the Devil
is dead ?

It’s a rank mistake, that Science has
made !

The Devil we surely can’t do without,
The failures up here of Justice, to aid.

CXLVIII

“Then, ‘The Sweet Bye and Bye,’ for
which we sigh—

You don’t mean that’s done for—knocked
into pi ?

What else for the toils of Life would
requite

Like Unending Bliss in Mansions on
High ?”

CXLIX

“There must be a Boss, that answers
for Fate.”

One said, “It’s something preposterous
to state,

That this whole Universe hadn’t a
Maker !

Itself, did anything ever create ?”

The Rubáiyát of the 20th Century

CL

“And what about Hell? Is that a mere
fake?

We've got to have that, just to keep
things straight.”

He said: “And if there really is no
Hell,

It has certainly been a great mistake.”

CLI

Then a Doctor, high in Microbic fame,
Who, their shapes had studied, and
knew by name,
From his own Microscopical Stand-
point

The Problem of Life rose up to explain.

CLII

“The Eden, in which to Gods Man was
kin,

Means a Primal State where purely
within

The Body, there flowed the Life-giving
blood.

The Microbe stands for Original Sin;

The Rubáiyát of the 20th Century

CLIII

“Whose entrance brought ending to Joy
everywhere,
And made of this Earth a pestilent lair
For myriad forms of Corruption most
foul—
One dark Ghehenna of Death and
Despair.”

CLIV

“But daylight breaks; soon the night
will be past;
Science, clear-eyed, has her horoscope
cast;
Some rare anti-toxin the blood shall
purge—
Man’s physical form will be saved, at
the last.”

CLV

A Physicist then spoke—“’Tis but the
weight
Of Matter gross, that sets the final date
To Life. A few, brief years, its load
we bear,
Then ’neath it sink; this is the curse of
Fate.”

The Rubáiyát of the 20th Century

CLVI

“A body, then of form ethereal,
Shall we create by cultures serial?
Or trace some process new, of Force,
that shall
From weight absolve the dense mate-
rial?

CLVII

“’Tis Force that first prepares the Mor-
tal road,
And gives to us the strength to bear the
load ;
May it not, at the last, to him that
seeks,
Reveal the secret ways of Life’s abode?”

CLVIII

The Savant’s listening ear, this Message
thrilled—
“That Function true of Life had been
instilled
In Matter gross ; and by due process
formed,
Was Something to be made, just as one
willed.

The Rubáiyát of the 20th Century

CLIX

Life was Electric all; and Vital Force
Was Matter pregnant made, from such
a source.
Its potent spell with Being thus en-
dowed
The Primal Cell growth of the struct-
ural course.”

CLX

“ ‘Twas thus,” the Wireless Message
plainly said,
“ That Life was first to Protoplasm wed,
And thence by process of Evolvement
slow,
Had been, to Types of Higher Function
led.”

CLXI

The Psychist’s ancient order blythe ex-
pressed
Their faith eternal, “that to be divest
Of gross material clay, was cause for
joy,”
And that, “by it, alone, the Soul was
blest.

The Rubáiyát of the 20th Century

CLXII

“Could we with opened eyes the True
Life sense,
Our Ransomed Souls set free from Mat-
ter dense,
Then myriad hosts of gladsome Spirits
bright
For Mortal Life would more than recom-
pense.”

CLXIII

Which same a Materialist, hirsute and
bland,
Deemed a pure bluff, and would fain call
the hand
“Of the Beggarly Beggar that made it,
Just to see,” quoth he, “if he’s got the
sand.”

CLXIV

The courteous Agnostic, calm and slow,
Serenely smiling, viewed Time’s fleeting
show :
On Dogmas of Belief, urbanely spoke
This wisest word, “ I really don’t know.

The Rubáiyát of the 20th Century

CLXV

“The varied Creeds” he said “in this
we blame,
That with most zealous care they strive
to gain
Some place and power for Self, and
thus would seek
An answer for Life’s Problem to obtain.

CLXVI

“For Us, the lofty Heights Impersonal ;
To Us, All Truth its welcome tale shall
tell,
Unmarred by thought of Self. We
take what comes.
Whatever is, is right, and all is well.”

CLXVII

Some claimed, “That Mind had a com-
plete control
Of Bodily Function, and governed the
whole;
And Death was but a cowardly habit,
Superinduced by some weakness of
Soul.”

The Rubaiyat of the 20th Century

CLXVIII

And then, as voice that fell from some
far spere,
This Newer Gospel held the listening
ear—
“One Medium fills, of Space, the
mighty realm,
And all its Constellations doth uprear.

CLXIX

“Invisible, intangible to sense,
Yet in, and by, and through it, Matter
dense
Is moved, like as a mere automaton,
And all of Life derives its being thence.

CLXX

“By it we keep in instant touch of sight
With the Material World; what we
term light
Are but its quivering vibrations, with
Whose ceaseless interplay, Space is be-
dight.”

The Rubáiyát of the 20th Century

CLXXI

Then straight one said—he of an elder school—
“Say! If this Force, Omnipotent, doth rule,
With outer limit none—a Cosmic Realm,
In each direction, an unending gaol,

CLXXII

“If Force all Life doth build up and maintain—
Create, and recreate, for aye the same,
Then you will pardon me if I may state
That what you deem a change, is but in name.”

CLXXIII

“It’s Law,” I said, “in place of Despot’s rod—
Unerring Law of Force that holds the rod
Of Empire, and that wields the Universe.”
“But I,” he said, “prefer to call it God.

The Rubáiyát of the 20th Century

CLXXIV

“For me the Faith of Morn—the Fairy
Wand
That gives to Life a zest—the Pilgrim
Band
That toils with Hope, and ever on-
ward moves
Toward the Shining Shore and Beulah
Land.”

* * * * *

CLXXV

All Life is but a play ; some stake their
game
On gilded Nothingness, and reap the
same ;
The Bubble breaks ; they grasp the
empty air ;
And surely are not they, alone, to blame ?

CLXXVI

Ah ! How Men strive for This World’s
wealth and power,
Which, at its best, lasts but a fleeting
hour !
And others, with a longer range, aspire
To Crowns and Kingdoms of a Heavenly
dower.

The Rubáiyát of the 20th Century

CLXXVII

Yea ! How they strive with strategem
and wile,
Through all the winding, devious, ways
of Guile !
But in the reading of the Broader
View
Say, Brother, is it really worth the
while ?

CLXXVIII

You thought to bribe St. Peter at the
gate,
Such store of gathered ducats you will
take !
What if the Gateman be not there at
all ?
What if the Dreamer did but dream a
fake ?

CLXXIX

Then wer't not better you had lived
care free ?
If such be Life, and only this Life be,
Why, then, with every lowest Child of
Earth
You may but feel a bond of sympathy.

The Rubaiyat of the 20th Century

CLXXX

Live and let live, while yet there's place
and room ;
Fades soon the flower, how bright soe'er
its bloom—
The whole Earth did you want? Why,
really, now,
You may not take it with you to the
Tomb.

CLXXXI

Yea! If I deem as Gold some Metal
Base,
And hoard and store the same with
eager haste,
Myself, alone, may I berate, when, at
the last
My Gold is Dross, my Diamonds are but
Paste.

CLXXXII

“If Gold to Dross, and Hope to Ashes
turn,
What then,” I asked, “may fires of
Truth not burn?
If remnant none, is left from hoarded
store
What Moral hence be drawn, that one
may learn?”

The Rubáiyát of the 20th Century

CLXXXIII

Then, on my anxious ear, there broke a
trill
So full of Life and Joy that it might fill
The Heavens high with soul-enrap-
turing song,
And all my sombre reasoning passed as
nil ;—

CLXXXIV

“Heed not the Morrow ! But enjoy To-
Day !
To live is Joy ; be happy while you
may !”
Never Philosophy was wiser heard
Than from this feathered songster, in
his lay.

CLXXXV

“But Hope,” I said, “and Joy, so soon
are spent !
What then,” I asked, “for Mortals may
be meant ?”
Then trilled the Bird a minor note
that said—
“Whatever cometh, let us be content.”

* * * * *

The Rubáiyát of the 20th Century

CLXXXVI

Yea! All things have an End. All doth
but pass!
Full well we know We are but as the
grass!
And so, when You have drained the Cup
of Life,
Your thanks express, and downward
turn the glass.

THE SONG OF THE STARS

“To him that believeth,” Faith fervently
cried,
“There are Mansions of Bliss, just over
the tide;
There’s a City Supernal, of a splendor
so bright
That mortal eye may not cope with the
sight;
He that believeth—the Truth he will
know.
Its walls are of jasper, and its streets
are of gold;
Its gates are of pearl, and its glories
unfold
Unto him that believeth—ever thus
be it so !”

The Song of the Stars

“Aye, fair is the Life Immortal !
In the radiant City of Light !
Whoso that passeth its portal
Shall be robed in its garments of
white.
Time shall not age nor tempests alarm
Through all the unending years.”
Thus, in its synchronous chorus,
Sang the Song of the Spheres.

Then a voice rose up in lugubrious
swell,
With a sound like a dirge, and a tone
like a knell ;
It echoed along the dark Portals of
Night
And the Legions of Faith shrank back
in affright ;—
‘ Swift falleth the pall of enveloping
Doom ;
Morn breaketh not on the Night of the
Tomb.

The Song of the Stars

Those are but Words—idle Words, that
are beating the air—

A phantasm of Hope, that forerunneth
Despair—

They are but Dreams—passing Dreams,
that waking, are gone—

An Echo prolonged of Man's Infantile
Song—

An Exhalant Vapor, that goes with the
breath—

A Flickering Gleam on the frontlet of
Death.”

“All Life is wearisome labor—

Day after day of trouble and moil;

Sweet is the Night that evermore brings
Rest from its purposeless toil.”

Down through the Limitless Spaces,

Where is naught that stays or debars,

In soothing refrain, thus to Mortals

Came the cheery Song of the Stars.

The Song of the Stars

When the Visions of Gladness had
palled on the sight,
And the Wailings of Sadness had waned
in their might,
The calm tones of Wisdom rose sweet
on the ear,
Like a Pean, far-sounding, but lowly and
clear ;—
“ ’Neath the Banner of Knowledge—in
the Knighthood of Truth—
Life’s stream floweth ever, in unending
Youth.
The Acolyte, meekly that waits at my
shrine,
Is bedight with the panoply of Service
Divine ;
I reward not with riches, or mansion, or
throne ;
A love for the Truth is my Guerdon
alone.”
Ceased was the voice ; then, o’er the
hush of the calm
Broke the joyous Star Chorus, with
Symphonic Psalm.—

The Song of the Stars

“ He that shall wait upon Wisdom—
Who the Light of her Face shall be-
hold—
Shall be glad, with the Joy of the Morn-
ing,
As it paints all the sky with its gold.
Her’s is the full note harmonic,
With no jarring discord to mar ;
Only with her is Happiness found,
To, the bound of the uttermost star.”

A Pilgrim Savant, tired and worn, had
reached, at last, the gaol
Whose topmost height all Truth reveals,
in full perspective whole.
“In broadest view, the Past,” he said,
“seems but an empty name,
Evolvement from Evolvement falleth,
evermore the same ;
The Universes come and go, responsive
to the call
Of that unseen but potent Force that
ever wields them all ;

The Song of the Stars

And ever on the changing tide, in shifting view, remote or near
From out the vast Unknowable, Life's evanescent forms appear.
All Space the viewless Ether fills, with no smallest break or flaw
And every Atom actuates, by definite, unchanging Law.
In ultra-microscopic form—below the range where sight finds place
It lays the deep foundations, whose top-stone is the Human Race.
The Spectrum reads the flashing ray, from dim, remotest star
And finds the same integral elements in motion everywhere.
Their swift vibrations mark the throbbing of the Universal Soul;
Matter and the Force that wields it, are, each, a unitary whole.
To him that grasps the Cosmic Problem, in its full concept I trow
The Past, the Present and the Future, are one eternal—Now."

The Song of the Stars

Then a mighty, chorusing shout
Went up from the hurtling Spheres,
As, in widening circles outward,
It broke on the lapsing years:—
“Lo, the riddles are solved of Space and
of Time!
Man has compassed the gaol of the
Omniscient Ken!
He is one with us in his knowledge sub-
lime!
Even as Gods are the Sons of Men?”

EPILOGUE



T IS hardly necessary to state that the Author of this Modern Rubáiyát has no Creed to maintain—No Dogma to be carefully guarded. The Revelation of Demonstrable Fact and Logical Deduction therefrom, is, to him, the only Revelation requiring credence.

You, as a Professed Christian, say, "That such Revelation comes from the Infinite Father, himself, and that all knowledge comes from God." Well, be it so! Then this is the one infallible communication which the Race is receiving from Him. Other Revelations, on which human creeds and beliefs are founded, ancient and modern, are constantly changing, to adapt themselves

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to the formulated record of this new and veracious Chronicler of the Truth. Other, so-called Revelations from the Infinite, clash in their beliefs, and are contradictory, the one to the other. Each of the isolated nations of antiquity appear to have been supplied with its own home-made assortment of Gods and Goddesses, which, in their conception, fairly represented the civilization, or want of civilization, of their several peoples. Then, take the World of to-day. Religious dogma is one thing to the Mohammedan, another to the Buddhist, or the follower of Confucius, and another, as delivered to the ancient Hindu, not to speak of the innumerable hostile and warring beliefs of the variegated creeds of Christianity itself.

“Man’s inhumanity to Man,” may, doubtless, be accredited, in no small degree, to the theological conception of

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a Supreme Being, who, though Omnipotent, yet allowed suffering, want and death, in every variety of excruciating agony, to be inflicted upon the Beings he had created. The logical inference necessarily followed that such things were inevitable, and even necessary, and hence we find the most atrocious cruelties of man to man, on the pages of recorded history, of nation upon nation perpetrated in the name of their Gods. To the rival national Deities, as interpreted by their several priesthoods, the outsiders were but Heathen, to be summarily blotted out and exterminated.

This was the pattern held up for so long to the Race. To the Higher Law of the old time Religionaire humanity was a dangerous sentiment, and one to be indulged in only under prescribed conditions. Even to our Puritan forefathers, most worthy men as they were,

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in many respects, the Deity, whom they abjectly worshiped, had foreordained the vast majority of the race to an endless torture in the flames of Hell; a matter to which they piously referred, as “the will of God.” To the Simon-pure brand of the Elect, the persecution of Non-conformists; the torturing and burning of witches and those, supposedly, “possessed of the Devil,” were not merely allowable, but stern matters of duty, to be neglected under peril of an eternal personal damnation. Verily, the words of Christianity’s founder,—“I come not to bring Peace, but a Sword,” have been more than justified, even up to comparatively recent dates in the World’s history.

The Revelations of Science, to the Race, on the contrary, when once demonstrably established, are world-wide in their acceptance, and everywhere the

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same. Like the sunshine and the rain, it comes with a benign benediction of healing and sustenance to Humanity. No bloody war was ever waged to establish her dogmas.

It comes, too, through the only mental faculty worthy of credence—that of the intellect, and of logical demonstration. Superstition and Mysticism are discredited witnesses in the court of highest human appeal. They are notoriously unworthy of belief, whether as to the miracles of the present day, or those of hundreds or thousands of years aback. Myth and tradition are the merest cobweb gossamer in the clear light of present everyday Science.

But then—how it jars on the self-consciousness, the *amour propre*, of the individual Human that the sum total of a Life Evolvement, whether that of a single planet, or that of the mighty realm

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of the Sidereal Universe in its entirety, from a cosmic point of view, is an absolute zero. A simple 0, with neither affix nor prefix to give it value, in the final reckoning of a star system evolvement will exactly express the product and the remainder. Nothing, apparently, is carried over. The slate is wiped clean. It is even doubtful, from the later standpoint, whether the erstwhile matter of the Star System, itself, can be safely reckoned on. The sands of Time carry, on their ever changing surface, no permanent record which the all-devouring waves of Oblivion may not obliterate.

The net result of all the enormous interactions of Force and Matter, shown in a sidereal evolution, from the human standpoint, is, presumably, absolutely nothing. Matter, which, in the course of such evolvement, may have attained to very complicated conditions of mole-

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cular grouping, reverts back again to the dissociate atom, or, at the farthest, has more or less transposition into the universal medium, the Ether. No Life continuity is traceable, or seemingly, possible, from one evolvement to another. Hitherto, Science has, in fact, utterly failed to demonstrate the existence of any form of individual Life entity, dissociated from the material physical existence.

The brilliant Oriental and Mediæval imagination, which in the lack of exact knowledge, peopled the realms of space with, "an innumerable company of Angels," and a host of departed spirits; with Gods and Goddesses; and our own Earth with Fauns and Satyrs; Nymphs and Dryads, of varied form and habitat; that mapped out a Nether World, or Hades, with its own peculiar set of occupants, is recognized by the Science of

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to-day at its actual valuation—a waking dream of the morning of the Race—beautiful, in many of its conceptions, but—only a dream.

“Lest we forget,” it may bear repetition that the net result of each of the periodic interactions of Matter and Force, shown in the Star System, from what seems at present, as the final scientific point of view, is an exact zero—neither plus nor minus, in either direction. If the later estimate of Matter proves ultimately correct, the proportions of the two factors Matter and Force—the sole tenants of a limitless Space—may vary, through resolvement of the one into the other, but, the sum of the two must be regarded as a constant and unchangeable quantity.

How wasteful it all seems from the human, economic standpoint! The accumulated culture and material posses-

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sions of a Race, and the Race, itself, wiped out at one fell swoop, or by a gradual failure of conditions which render such Life possible. A, seemingly, interminable æon of Life evolvement from the primal cellgrowth to the finished Human product—and then, at the last, this chef-d'œuvre of the ages, and all of his priceless accumulations thrown away—discarded as a worthless bauble ! Oh, the sorry nature of the process ! The wasteful prodigality of it all !

And then think of the endless diapason of Human Sorrow ever throbbing an accompaniment ! to the remorseless march of a planetary evolvement ! A perfected physique ! and all - probing knowledge and mental acumen of the individual, as of the Race, acquired, but to be ruthlessly scattered !

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The transition from Subjective Philosophy to a Logical Deduction from ascertained data, as the fundamental basis of Human Knowledge, marks the beginning of a new era in the advancement of the Race. Henceforth, its foundations were sure, and, step by step, has been builded upon it the magnificent structure of Modern Science.

The practical demonstration of the theory of Life Evolution in the latter half of the 19th century, marked a great advance by the Race, in the direction of acquired knowledge. A summit had been attained, from which, above the low-lying mists of Ignorance and Superstition, the eye might sweep the broad horizon of Truth.

Henceforth, to the dweller on the heights, the Supernatural was a factor eliminated from the entire domain of Human Thought. With the advent of

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this basic truth the Miraculous had stepped down and out, or, at the most, remained, as in many cases, a dearly cherished relic of the Dream-land of the Past. Nevertheless, it brought, and is bringing, in its trail, like all new things, more or less of havoc and disaster.

All new ideas are iconoclasts. They remorselessly smash the Idols, venerated mayhap, by generation after generation of Human Kind. They never stop to inquire whether it is within themselves to satisfactorily supply the place of the old. Ruthlessly, they shatter and, when the ground is cleared, we must, perforce, accept that which remains. Yet, no sane man—no rightly balanced intellect—asks for aught else than Truth.

The inherent, hereditary ingredient of Superstition works in an ever narrowing field as the race rises in the scale of intelligence. The Revelations that come

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through the medium of acquired fact and logical deduction are the only ones before which Science humbly bows; or rather, we may say, on which she proudly stands. Newton with his Law of Gravitation; La Place with his Mecanique Celestial; Darwin with his Origin of Species; Clerk-Maxwell with his Electro-Magnetic Theory of Light, each marked off the result of a long day's march, in the toilsome upward path of Humanity toward the higher table-land of Truth. These, and a host of other tireless workers, many of them not less widely known, supply the data from which come the broad generalizations of to-day.

And—at the last—how simple it all is! This orderly, unceasing order of events! And yet, sorry are we to say it,—how almost infinitely little becomes Man, as relating to the whole!

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The fervid, old-time Theologue who placed the whole created Universe in one scale of the balance and found it overweighted by the Soul of the Humblest Human placed in the other, has, perforce, to take a back seat. His vivid peroration, in the light of Modern Science, was a work of the imagination, pure and simple. Life, in its entirety of planetary evolvement, is a transient happening, of no Cosmic moment—simply an incidental actuation of the universal Force Medium, the Ether, necessarily occurring, under certain conditions of aggregations of material particles.

And then, the Force Medium, itself, which holds the planets and the innumerable members of the Star System in their orderly movement and grouping, is that same which actuates the chemical and molecular grouping of atoms; the same which runs our street cars; our tel-

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egraphs and telephones. We term it Electricity and measure its potentials in volts of tensional strength and amperes of quantity. By its manipulation of the material particles within the bodily frame it is the Maintainer and reproducing Evolver of all the varied and varying forms of Life Organisms.

Now let us grasp some of the indicated cosmic potentialities of this Universal Force Medium. From seemingly limitless distances of Space, in every direction, the light of the countless radiating members of the great Star System is transmitted to us by a similar vibratory action of the Ether, showing that it everywhere pervades the Universe, with an everywhere manifest similarity of Force actuation. Interpreted by the spectrum, the distant cosmic bodies, from which such radiations emanate, are shown to be of precisely the same ele-

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ments with which we are familiar. Under suitable conditions, we can hardly otherwise than infer that the surfaces of the innumerable planetary bodies accompanying these radiant, life-giving Suns are, likewise, the abode of countless types and species of Life forms, moving upward in the slow steps of physical and mental development, even as here.

Much ingenuity has been exercised by learned minds, familiar with the effects of environment upon type, in the varied species of our own planet, in conjecturing the diversity of phases which life forms might assume under the widely differing conditions existing on cosmic bodies. What form of Life will exist on the great planet Jupiter when it shall have become sufficiently cool for an orderly life development? A surface attraction of some six or seven times that of the Earth, such as will presumably obtain

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when its mass shall have attained the normal density associated with a cooled opaque exterior, would, necessarily, bar the ordinary forms of Life familiar here. In fact, a race of pygmies excessively dwarfed as to size, would seem as absolutely called for, although in the water a larger physical development might prevail. The many times greater atmospheric pressure would also require a special adaptation of the organisms.

Altogether, the widely differing factors of the environment would hardly seem encouraging for a Life development such as would seem a desirable one, from a mundane point of view. The burden of gravitation would be an almost crushing one, on the bodily frame, unless, indeed, through the agency of Natural Selection with its correlated Survival of the Fittest, a bodily form of excessive strength and lightness might result.

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On the other hand, a cosmic mass like our own Moon or one of the numerous family of the asteroids, provided they were able to maintain upon their surface the, seemingly, necessary concomitants of air and water for the period of time required to bring out any considerable life evolvement, would appear to offer exceptionally favorable life conditions. The same degree of physical strength, in the body, accompanied by a reduction of gravitational weight to one quarter or an eighth part of the load we now carry would seem to mean a life of tireless energy—a surplus of stored strength, with a minimum of toil and labor. In such an easy-going existence, with all the untaxed faculties free to cope with the requirements of the environment, a full solution of the varied problems of Life and Matter would seem easy of attainment.

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How, then, about Life continuity, as related to the immaterial persistence of a planetary evolvement, in its higher type? One simple fact would seem to stand, as an insurmountable barrier to a philosophic belief in this direction. As stated previously, the Human Race—legend and superstition to the contrary, notwithstanding—has never, in a scientifically demonstrable manner, come into contact with an entity other than those of the physical life forms of our planet. An immaterial entity is a thing, so far, unknown to Science.

With our present understanding of the evolutionary process and the sameness of Matter and Force action throughout the Universe we can fairly postulate about each of the radiating centers of the Star System an accompanying planetary retinue in a more or less opaque condition of exterior surface. For the

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same reason we may likewise assume, upon these, life forms in varied and differing stages of evolvement.

Could we bridge, in our conceptions, the narrow bit of space that intervenes between ourselves and our neighboring planet Mars, with which we have a constant vibratory, ether intercommunication of only five or six minutes in its transmission, possibly we might meet even there, with cosmic Life conditions which in their foreshadowing of a tragic denouement to the perfected flower of a planetary evolvement should stir the broadest sympathies of the Earth-dweller. A great Race, mayhap, with hundreds of thousands of years of recorded history; one, perchance, that from the far off morning of Historic Time has mastered the secret of an individual physical Life Continuity and that has held in its own hand for centuries

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almost innumerable a practical control of the numerical output and perpetuity of the physical organism, itself, and yet finds itself face to face with the near failure of air and water upon the planetary surface. We can rest assured those superior intellects would, under such conditions put up a splendid fight for existence, in ways hardly comprehensible to our duller conceptions. The natural process, upon a planetary surface, of a dissociation of its waters into oxides and hydrocarbons, by contact with the heated interior mass, would perhaps, be reversed by an artificial dissociation of the original products, or the unlimited potencies of the Universal Force Medium drawn upon, in some, at present, to us, unexplainable manner, for purposes of sustenance and warmth.

The now arid and airless surface of the Moon has, doubtless, had some form

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of a Life History extending through that very prolonged period of the Earth's existence, in which our present oceans formed a vast, vaporous envelope of the planet, itself, with a more or less continuous precipitation and explosion into steam upon the heated surface.

Whether the Moon-voyaging, rummaging Antiquarian of a coming time would be able to find relics of a former intelligent race is a problem necessarily depending on the nature of the lighter material originally thrown off from the nebulous Earth mass, as well as to the duration of the period in which Life conditions, as we know them, were possible.

Then take Life in its broader cosmic significance, as related to the evolutions of Matter. Go back a thousand million of our years, or, mayhap, ten thousand million, till we reach that long ago epoch of a prior evolution of the material Star

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System. Make it a million or a million of million of such inconceivable periods of Time. Undoubtedly, Life, all along that mighty stretch of immeasurable years, was everywhere a concomitant of material evolvement.

Where are the Denizens of that hoary antiquity of the Past? Some, doubtless, there were, even as now, whose intellects were enshrouded, ostrich-like, in the all-enveloping sand of a subjective hypothesis and in the childish imagery of Faith saw, ever and anon, the wonderful mirage of a Golden City and pearly gates, beyond, what, to their vision was but a river to be crossed. Time's Lost Children were these. But where are the unshackled of intellect, the clear-sighted, who marched downward and outward into an ocean they knew to be shoreless? Where are the courageous, the strong-hearted, who with

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a calm serenity contemplated the blank wall of Fate up against which their course was inevitably leading, but repined them not?

Alike of the one and the other the spaces are ominously silent. Alike, as to him that died yesterday, and to those of the hoary antiquity of a past Star System evolvement, comes no answering note.

Ye brave, courageous Souls, who on Evolvement's topmost height have seen all Truth with clear-eyed vision, and with calm self-effacement have gazed undauntedly, and with unblanched face upon the black wall of Night and Silence that loomed across your pathway, even now, as we grasp the full meaning of a planetary Life Evolvement, we feel a straining bond of sympathy reaching backward into the hoary antiquity of the Time-that-knows-no-Beginning. The

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Song of Life we sing to-day ; the dirge of Fate we chant ; how often has it echoed down the limitless aisles of the past eternities in all the variations of beatific hope ; of calm enjoyment, and a yet calmer despair !

The mutations of birth, life, and final extinction of the individual entity, reproduced in the race, in its entirety ; the passionate cry of the Lost Children of Time for an unending Eternity of joy and love ; the wail of foreboding sadness, and the proud serenity of Knowledge, that calmly bows to the all-potent Wand of Fate, elicit no response. The spaces, to-day, as yesterday, are silent. No scroll holds the records of the mighty races, which Time and Force, in their ceaseless rounds, have evolved, in the hoary past of millions of millions of Star System evolvements. They have passed, even as the mighty life races

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peopling the unending realms of Space to-day are passing.

But the new is coming. The process is to be repeated ; repeated without end. The yet unborn, oncoming generations of Star System Evolvements, even as those that have gone, are endless in their continuity of extension.

Oh, Great Souls of the Past, to whose clear-eyed vision all the secret things of Matter and of Life were but as an open book, we apologize to You ! Our Race is but of Yesterday. The slime of the Protoplasmic Ooze is yet upon our garments. Only a little way aback, and we were worshiping Dumb Idols of wood and stone—the work of our own hands. A little time agone, and we were offering up our fellows on sacrificial altars, in a servile, cringing fear of the Unknown. Hardly, even now, have we ceased striving to propitiate an imag-

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inary, vindictive Diety by a cruel persecution of our Brothers. We are yet saturated with Superstition, and are as Slaves, not yet emancipated from its abject, grovelling bondage.

CALCHAS.

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